

Lesson 12

After the defeat of the Amorites in Bashan, it is time for the Israelites to cross over the Jordan and go into the Promised Land—to go take out the Canaanites. But, harkening back to the report of the 10 spies prior to the Israelites 40 years in the wilderness, the spies report came back with details of Nephilim in that land.

[Num 13:32-33 ESV] 32 *So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, "The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. 33 And there we saw the **Nephilim** (the sons of Anak, who come from the **Nephilim**), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them."*

In Deuteronomy 20, God (through Moses) is giving instructions to the Israelites as to how to do their conquests.

[Deu 20:10-12 ESV] 10 *"When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. 11 And if it responds to you peaceably and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you. 12 But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. 13 And when the LORD your God gives it into your hand, you shall put all its males to the sword, 14 but the women and the little ones, the livestock, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as plunder for yourselves. And you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God has given you."*

When they come to cities not included in the Promised Land, they are to offer up peace. If peace is not accepted, then the males are to be killed, but the women and the rest can become the Israelites servants.

But in verse 16, God says that in the cities of the Promised Land, there will be no mercy.

[Deu 20:16-18 ESV] 16 *But in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, 17 but you shall **devote them to complete destruction [kherem]**, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the LORD your God has commanded, 18 that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done **for their gods**, and so you sin against the LORD your God.*

To put this all into its Biblical perspective, let me again turn to The Unseen Realm, pgs. 203-4.

“The idea of *kherem* is broader than warfare. Fundamental to the concept is a sanctioning of some person or thing because it is forbidden either due to an accursed status or due to Yahweh’s exclusive ownership and use... [In Israel] the death sentence for worshipping another god was described with

kharem (Exodus 22:20).¹ Any person guilty of this theological crime was accursed. The sentence could not be revoked. Yahweh was the exclusive owner of that life or thing.

Deuteronomy 32:8-9² is the basis for the general goal of the conquest. Israel is Yahweh's elect portion of humanity, and the land of Canaan is the geography that Yahweh specifically allotted to this people.

In the view of the biblical writers, Israel is at war with enemies spawned by rival heavenly beings. The Nephilim bloodlines were not like the peoples of the disinherited nations. Genesis 10 clearly casts the human inhabitants of those nations as owing their existence to Yahweh, as they descended from Noah's sons and, therefore, Noah – all the way back to Adam, Yahweh's first human son.

The Nephilim bloodlines had a different pedigree. They were produced by other heavenly beings. They did not belong to Yahweh, and he therefore had no interest in claiming them. **Human coexistence was not possible with the spawn of other gods."**

Viewed against this backdrop, Joshua's *kherem* is the extension of a holy war that began back in Genesis 6. The Flood stopped the first round in this warfare, but the fallen angels were back on this side of the Flood with the same agenda, only targeted more specifically to the Promised Land.

The spiritual warfare in this second round gets underway through human activity. Through the leadership of Moses, it begins in the Transjordan. The lives of Israel's enemies were to be 'devoted to destruction' [*kherem*] as an act of sacrifice to Yahweh.

So now comes the time to go into the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua. They supernaturally cross the Jordan River, and the first city they come to is Jericho.

[Jos 6:17, 21 ESV] 17 *And the city and all that is within it shall be **devoted to the LORD for destruction**. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent... .. 21 Then they **devoted all in the city to destruction**, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword.*

The Israelites take out Jericho.

Two weeks ago we saw a violation of God's decree of *kherem*. Here at Jericho, God told the people to take none of the spoil for themselves. All were to be given to God. The people and animals were devoted to destruction. The material possessions were to be put into the treasury of the Lord.

But one of the members of the tribe of Judah kept and hid some of the material possessions. God knew it and called him out.

After Jericho fell then the Israelites set their sights on little Ai. They only sent a small army up the valley to Ai because it was so small. The Israelites came back routed.

¹ [Exo 22:20 ESV] 20 "Whoever sacrifices to any god, other than the LORD alone, shall be **devoted to destruction**.

² [Deu 32:8-9 ESV] 8 *When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. 9 **But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.***

They whined and cried before God. God told them they were beaten because someone had violated *kherem*. God then singled out the violator and he and his family were destroyed. Once they themselves had been destroyed as a dedicated-to-destruction act before God, only then did God return fellowship with and leadership before the Israelites.

Reading the remainder of the book of Joshua will show the Israelites conquests of the Promised Land. From Jericho they go west and split the land in two.

First, they turn south and defeat all the cities in the southern region. After that, they turn north and defeat the cities in the northern region.

But they did not do the job as thoroughly as they should have and it came back to haunt them as God warned it would. As the story continues into the book of Judges, the Israelites fail in their lone relationship with the Lord their God as they become seduced by the Canaanites whom they left within their lands. They end up worshipping other gods; the absolute no-no as mandated by the Lord their God.

They were instructed to kill or drive out all the people groups of the Promised Land. This they did not do.

As an example, read Joshua 9.

Through being deceived, the Israelites made a covenant with the Gibeonites, who were Hivites. Note verse 14.

[Jos 9:14 ESV] 14 *So the men took some of their provisions, **but did not ask counsel from the LORD.***

This was in violation of God's command in Deuteronomy 7:2.

[Deu 7:1-2 ESV] 1 *"When the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations more numerous and mightier than you, 2 and when the LORD your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then you must devote them to complete destruction [*kherem*]. **You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them.***

This is just one example of their failure to not be thorough in their *kherem*. This is what came back to haunt them in their journey away from the Lord their God throughout the Book of Judges.

Also note Joshua 11:21-22.

[Jos 11:21-22 ESV] 21 *And Joshua came at that time and cut off the Anakim from the hill country, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua devoted them to destruction with their cities. 22 There was none of the Anakim left in the land of the people of Israel. **Only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod did some remain.***

Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod were the lands of the Philistines. Now you know where Goliath came from.

1 Chronicles 20:4-8

We see in these verses giants other than Goliath who were amongst the Philistines.

I now want to bring attention to the land of Bashan

To confirm the Bashan geography, consider these verses:

[1Ch 6:71 ESV] 71 *To the Gershomites were given out of the clan of the half-tribe of Manasseh: **Golan in Bashan** with its pasturelands and Ashtaroth with its pasturelands...*

Notice the Golan mentioned, as in Golan Heights; and Golan is in Bashan.

[1Ch 5:23 ESV] 23 *The members of the half-tribe of Manasseh lived in the land. They were very numerous from Bashan to Baal-hermon, Senir, and **Mount Hermon**.*

Now Bashan is used in the same breath and geographic scope with Mount Hermon.

Mount Hermon [known for its three peaks] is in present day Lebanon-Syria and reaches to a height of 9,200 feet. It is not far from the Mediterranean Sea, so it perceives as a high mountain (from seal level to 9,000 feet in short order). Mount Hermon is north of the Sea of Galilee.

To the Israelite mind, Mount Hermon and the land of Bashan are the geographic center of the evil forces in the spiritual warfare. If you wanted to conjure up images of the demonic and death and the gates of hell, you would refer to Bashan.

Remember, according to their belief as in their reading the Book of Enoch, it was upon Mount Hermon that the sinning angels, the Watchers, descended to earth and then did their mating with human women.

To the Israelite mind, Mount Hermon is in the possession of the “other gods.” Mount Hermon was the gateway upon which the spiritual warfare comes down to earth. In their mind, Mount Hermon is the gateway to hell.

Does this concept of Mount Hermon as the possession of the “other gods” and the gateway to hell hold any validity in God’s mind?

[Psa 68:15-18 ESV] 15 *O mountain of God [can and should be translated ‘gods’, as the Hebrew word is “Elohim” and will therefore allow a translation of ‘gods’], mountain of Bashan; O many-peaked mountain, mountain of Bashan! 16 Why do you look with hatred, O many-peaked mountain, at the mount that God desired for his abode, yes, where the LORD will dwell forever? 17 The chariots of God are twice ten thousand, thousands upon thousands; the Lord is among them; Sinai is now in the sanctuary. 18 You ascended on high, leading a host of captives in your train and receiving gifts among men, even among the rebellious, that the LORD God may dwell there.*

Here we see God having a “mountain issue” with the mountain of Bashan. God asks the question of the mountain of Bashan; *Why do you look with hatred, O many-peaked mountain, at the mount that God desired for his abode, yes, where the LORD will dwell forever?*

God is having a mountain stare-down with the mountain of Bashan. Why the mountain of Bashan? Because that is where the angels descended, and where the Israelite geography and theology would put the center of the demonic realm. Mount Hermon, in the Israelite mind, is the gateway to hell.

We see Jesus playing off this concept in Matthew 16 when he took the disciples up to Caesarea Philippi, which is north of the Sea of Galilee, into the headwaters of the Jordan River. This is just at the base of Mount Hermon.

[Mat 16:13, 16-18 ESV] 13 *Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ... 16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, **and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.***

Jesus said that He will build His church "on this rock." What rock? On Peter? Maybe. Or could He have possibly been pointing at Mount Hermon when He said, "on this rock?" I believe the answer to both questions is, yes.

What has Jesus built His New Testament church with?

Mostly Gentiles; or in other words, the peoples of the nations that were disinherited at Babel and turned over to the administration of the other gods.

Since the Israelites collectively rejected Christ as the Messiah, Christ then turned his focus to a new vehicle through which He could witness to the world. That became the New Testament church, and that church is, for all practical purposes, made up of Gentiles.

But the Gentiles are under the "ownership" of the other gods. They are under the ownership of the beings who are theologically, in the Israelites mind, the possessors of Mount Hermon, or, within these "gates of hell."

Standing at the base of Mount Hermon when Jesus said the previously cited verses from Matthew, to an Israelites mind, Jesus was standing at the "gates of hell" since Mount Hermon (also called the mountain of Bashan) was the center of the demonic geography.

What Jesus is saying is He will build His church from within the very peoples [Gentiles] that the other gods have jurisdiction over, and that the gates of hell, a euphemism for these other gods and their realm of jurisdiction, shall not prevail against Christ's church being built right within their very own people jurisdiction.

The gates of hell, or in other words the other gods, will not stop Christ from building His church from among the other god's people.

Every sermon I have ever heard preached upon this passage in Matthew 16 centers upon Jesus telling Peter that he will build his church upon Peter. Then this morphs into a sermon about how Peter is or isn't the first Pope. This type of sermon seriously misses the entire message of Matthew 16.

The message is that Jesus points at Mount Hermon and says that it is upon this rock, Mount Hermon—the gate of hell inhabited by the other gods who are the possessors of the Gentiles—it is within the other god's realm that I, Christ, will build my Church. And those other gods, identified euphemistically as the "gates of hell," will not be able to stop Christ from building his Church from among the other god's Gentiles.

Peter fits into this discussion because Peter lays the ground work for the Apostles to expand their focus from just preaching the gospel of Christ to the Jews to also preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. It was Peter who was given the vision of the unclean animals coming down from heaven in the sheet and God told Peter to eat. Peter says, "no way, unclean animals." God says, "what God has made clean, do not call it common."

Acts 10:9-45

Peter has this vision three times. Then Gentiles come and ask for him to visit them. Peter goes, and then Peter sees the Holy Spirit coming upon the Gentiles in the same manner that the Holy Spirit came upon the Jews at Pentecost. It was through this that Peter converted to accepting the Gentiles as part of God's salvation plan and imparted that inclusion upon the rest of the Apostles and Jewish followers of Christ.

Where does Jesus get this power and authority over the gates of hell?

Back in Genesis 12 and 15 God told Abraham that he would bless all the nations of the earth through his Seed [which at that time was nothing but Gentiles]. We know this Seed to be Christ, and we also know this to include the Gentiles. In Genesis 15 Abraham believed God that he would have uncountable offspring and God counted it to Abraham as righteousness.

But it is not done here. Abraham, in his brashness, asked God for an earthly guarantee. God agreed, established a blood covenant, then walked the aisle Himself. But Abraham isn't off the hook. Maybe 30 years or so later God tells Abraham to kill Isaac, the son through whom God said the promise would come. Abraham wanted a guarantee in Genesis 15. God gave him one but is now throwing that guarantee back in Abraham's face. "I made you a heavenly promise, you wanted an earthly guarantee, I gave you that. Now how much do you trust me with that earthly guarantee? Go kill Isaac and let's find out."

[Gen 22:1 ESV] *1 After these things **God tested Abraham** and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."*

You know the story. Abraham goes through with killing Isaac. God stops him at the last minute from killing Isaac. Abraham passed the test.

[Genesis 12] He said, "*Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.*"

Now comes the best part. Back in Matthew, Jesus is at Caesarea Philippi. He is standing at the "gates of hell" and says that those gates cannot stop Him. Where does that authority come from?

[Gen 22:15-18 ESV] *15 And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven 16 and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, **because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son,** 17 I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. **And your offspring shall possess the gate of his***

enemies, 18 and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, [WHY?] because you have obeyed my voice."

Jesus gets this power and authority because Abraham was obedient to the voice of God when Abraham was told to kill his son; the son who was the fulfillment of the promise and the covenant that he asked for back in Genesis 15.